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# meap

Michigan Educational Assessment

Program

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**Released Items**  
from the  
**HST in Reading Assessment**



Michigan Educational Assessment Program  
January 2000

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“The Open Window,” from *The Short Stories of Saki*, by H. H. Munro, published by Macmillan Publishing Company.

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“The Importance of Fiction,” by E. L. Doctorow. Copyright © 1986 by E. L. Doctorow. Reprinted by permission of Mr. Doctorow.

“Taming Rude Technologies,” by Gary T. Marx, from *Technology Review*, January 1994, Vol. 97, No. 1. Copyright © 1994 by Technology Review. Reprinted by permission.

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## **Important note about using this released reading test form:**

This test form was used statewide as part of the High School Proficiency Test in Reading. After it was used, legislative mandates required that several changes be made to the high school tests, including shortening the test administration time. While none of the current High School Tests in Reading contain four reading selections or as many questions as this released test form, the overall format, the kinds of selections and questions, and the scoring process are very similar.

**This released HSPT form contains:**

four reading selections  
20 within the reading selections items  
14 across the reading selections items

**Current HST forms contain:**

three reading selections  
18 within the reading selections items  
10 across the reading selections items

**All:**

- are based upon a common theme or focus;
- contain multiple-choice questions that are specific to each selection, and,
- multiple-choice questions that ask about two or more of the selections, and,
- one scenario question that asks students to use details and examples from the reading selections to support their extended response.

## PART I

### DIRECTIONS

In this test, you will demonstrate your reading abilities by reading selections that are all related to the same focus question which is stated below. It is important to keep the focus question in mind as you are reading the selections and answering the test questions.

This test has two parts. You will have at **LEAST** 50 minutes to finish each part of the test. If necessary, additional time will be provided. If you wish, you may write down some notes to yourself in your test booklet, but any writing you want to be scored **MUST** go in the ANSWER DOCUMENT.

Part I includes multiple-choice questions for each of the individual reading selections and multiple-choice questions that ask about two or more reading selections. In Part II, Response-to-the-Reading-Selections, you will be asked to write a thoughtful one to two page response to a scenario and a question related to the scenario.

Mark your answers in your ANSWER DOCUMENT beginning with number 1 in the area labeled Session 1: Reading Part I. For each question, choose the **BEST** answer. If you are not sure of the answer to a question, make your **BEST** choice and go on to the next question. If you skip a question, be sure to skip the number in your ANSWER DOCUMENT that corresponds to that question.

Use only a No. 2 pencil to mark your answers. Make a dark mark that fills the oval in your ANSWER DOCUMENT. If you change an answer, be sure to erase the first mark completely.

Remember, mark only one answer for each numbered multiple-choice question. Make sure the number of the question corresponds to the number in the ANSWER DOCUMENT.

Begin Part I by reading the first selection. After you have finished reading, turn the page and begin marking your answers in the ANSWER DOCUMENT starting with number 1 in the area labeled Session 1. When you have finished answering the questions for the first selection, repeat this process for the remaining reading selections.

Once you have finished Part I, close your test booklet and put down your pencil.

If you do not understand any of these directions, please raise your hand.

**FOCUS QUESTION:** “Do any forms of communication threaten our society?”

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## READING SELECTION #1

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“The Open Window,” from *The Short Stories of Saki*, by H. H. Munro, published by Macmillan Publishing Company.

**DIRECTIONS:** For each question, choose the BEST answer. You may look back at “The Open Window” as often as necessary.

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“The Open Window”

Questions 1-6

- 1 The niece uses Nuttel’s lack of knowledge about his new environment to
  - A establish his trust in her.
  - B get him lost in the bog.
  - C set her trap.
  - D make him feel comfortable.
  
- 2 In the second column on page 5 of this story, the niece stares in “dazed horror” because she
  - A needs to strengthen the credibility of her story.
  - B worries she will be caught in her lie.
  - C fears for her aunt’s safety.
  - D questions what she is seeing.
  
- 3 How does the niece use the truth to make her story believable?
  - A The doctor has ordered rest for Nuttel.
  - B The men really are out hunting.
  - C The aunt is very worried.
  - D The hound is badly wounded.
  
- 4 How is Nuttel’s behavior influenced by his imagination?
  - A It helps him to make sound decisions.
  - B It enables him to face the facts.
  - C It allows him to let fiction become the truth.
  - D It encourages him to use his sense of humor.

- 5** How does the niece's story affect Nuttel's perception of what is happening?
- A** He believes the hunters are ghosts.
  - B** He realizes he has been tricked.
  - C** He believes the whole family is crazy.
  - D** He thinks the niece is a great storyteller.
- 6** How does the niece explain Nuttel's behavior at the end of this story?
- A** She announces that he had an emergency.
  - B** She tells the others he is afraid of ghosts.
  - C** She makes up another story.
  - D** She says he must have felt sick.

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## READING SELECTION #2

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“It’s How You Play the Game!” from *Change!* by Isaac Asimov. Copyright © 1981 by Isaac Asimov. Reprinted by permission of the Estate of Isaac Asimov, c/o Ralph M. Vicinanza, Ltd.



**DIRECTIONS:** For each question, choose the BEST answer. You may look back at “It’s How You Play the Game!” as often as necessary.

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“It’s How You Play the Game!”

Questions 7-11

- 7 According to this article, computers benefit society in all of the following ways **EXCEPT** that they
- A minimize routine and repetitious tasks.
  - B increase the need to memorize information.
  - C reduce the need for acquiring trivial information.
  - D increase opportunities for leisure activities.
- 8 According to this article, computers
- A create a society of isolated individuals.
  - B interfere with human communication.
  - C take more from society than they give to it.
  - D give more to society than they take from it.
- 9 When the author states in paragraph 4 that “Computers, however, threaten to take away almost all the mental work with which we have been keeping our brains fit through the ages, leaving us nothing to do,” he is using
- A realism.
  - B symbolism.
  - C sarcasm.
  - D alliteration.
- 10 The title is related to the author’s use of the italicized words in paragraph 10 because it
- A illustrates the importance of learning rules to play the game.
  - B questions the importance of computers as tools for learning.
  - C emphasizes the skills needed to play computer games.
  - D supports the author’s claim about the role of computers.
- 11 In paragraph 12, the author chose to put the word “games” in quotations because it
- A emphasizes the broader meaning of the word “game.”
  - B draws attention to the misuse of the word “game.”
  - C identifies the title of an article written by the same author.
  - D indicates the difference between “games” and “game theory.”

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## READING SELECTION #3

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“The Importance of Fiction,” by E. L. Doctorow. Copyright © 1986 by E. L. Doctorow. Reprinted by permission of Mr. Doctorow.

**DIRECTIONS:** For each question, choose the BEST answer. You may look back at “The Importance of Fiction” as often as necessary.

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“The Importance of Fiction”  
Questions 12-16

- 12** The author of this article believes that fiction is
- A** a type of writing that perpetuates myths.
  - B** a type of writing that is limited to fantasy situations.
  - C** the most effective form of written communication.
  - D** a difficult literary form to understand.
- 13** The author values fiction because stories
- A** bring a sense of humor to people’s lives.
  - B** focus on fantasy situations.
  - C** keep people from becoming too serious.
  - D** link the present to the past.
- 14** According to the author, the reason everyone can tell stories is that stories
- A** connect individuals to people about whom they care.
  - B** are more fun than nonfiction.
  - C** are easy to remember.
  - D** come from the natural use of language.
- 15** According to this article, what form of communication has been essential to survival?
- A** scientific discourse
  - B** storytelling
  - C** advertising
  - D** debate
- 16** When the author states that fiction is democratic, he is MOST LIKELY suggesting that it
- A** limits a person’s thinking to political issues.
  - B** requires both sides to be presented.
  - C** allows ideas to be shared without having to defend them.
  - D** expects everyone to follow specific rules.

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## READING SELECTION #4

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“Taming Rude Technologies,” by Gary T. Marx, from *Technology Review*, January 1994, Vol. 97, No. 1. Copyright © 1994 by Technology Review. Reprinted by permission.

**DIRECTIONS:** For each question, choose the BEST answer. You may look back at “Taming Rude Technologies” as often as necessary.

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“Taming Rude Technologies”  
Questions 17-20

- 17** According to the article, new communication technologies present increased opportunities for
- A** deception.
  - B** confidentiality.
  - C** privacy.
  - D** invention.
- 18** According to this article, the author is concerned that technology will
- A** create extra work for people.
  - B** be too difficult for children.
  - C** violate people’s privacy.
  - D** be extremely costly to use.
- 19** The title is related to the illustration in this article because it
- A** shows that technology is in control of human behavior.
  - B** raises questions about new technology and human behavior.
  - C** emphasizes how new technologies prevent deception.
  - D** portrays how technology creates new educational opportunities.
- 20** The illustration in this article supports the author’s central point by showing that
- A** technology will be the foundation for learning in the 21st century.
  - B** technology encourages respect for new ideas.
  - C** there is frustration between people and technology.
  - D** cooperation is needed as one learns new rules for using technology.

**DIRECTIONS:** For each question, choose the BEST answer. You may look back at all the selections as often as necessary.

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Use two or more of the selections to answer Questions 21-34.

- 21** How is the information in “Taming Rude Technologies” and “It’s How You Play the Game!” SIMILAR?
- A** Both have concerns about the impact of technology on communication.
  - B** Both focus on a single perspective to support main points.
  - C** Both use examples that are unrelated to the major topic.
  - D** Both lack solutions to the communication problems discussed.
- 22** In “The Open Window,” who would MOST LIKELY be intimidated by new technology?
- A** Vera
  - B** Mrs. Sappleton
  - C** Ronnie
  - D** Framton Nuttel
- 23** “The Open Window” and “Taming Rude Technologies” are SIMILAR because they
- A** demonstrate that consideration of others is important.
  - B** show that new inventions make manners unimportant.
  - C** connect country life to city life.
  - D** illustrate how technology affects emotions.
- 24** How are “Taming Rude Technologies” and “The Open Window” SIMILAR?
- A** Both suggest benefits of a democratic society.
  - B** Both deal with the impact of people’s actions on others.
  - C** Both illustrate examples of effective communication.
  - D** Both show that communication is a simple process.

- 25 The author of “The Importance of Fiction” states that the people who told him stories must have had a very firm view of themselves. To which character in “The Open Window” does this statement MOST apply?
- A Ronnie
  - B Vera
  - C Framton Nuttel
  - D Mrs. Sappleton
- 26 Which of the following would the author of “The Importance of Fiction” MOST LIKELY think about the niece in “The Open Window”?
- A She does not have affection for her audience.
  - B She has affection for her audience.
  - C She is not a good storyteller.
  - D She is a great storyteller.
- 27 “The Open Window” and “The Importance of Fiction” are SIMILAR because they show that
- A effective communication leads to misunderstanding.
  - B effective communication can change people’s lives.
  - C creativity is not essential to being understood.
  - D human experiences are not important.
- 28 The author of “The Importance of Fiction” would MOST LIKELY agree that the niece’s storytelling in “The Open Window” is enhanced by her ability to
- A create details.
  - B talk fast.
  - C face reality.
  - D ignore history.

- 29** The authors of “The Importance of Fiction” and “It’s How You Play the Game!” share a common assumption that computers and fiction
- A** depend on scientific advancements.
  - B** reduce misunderstandings.
  - C** lead to an honest sharing of experiences.
  - D** rely on human experiences.
- 30** The authors of “Taming Rude Technologies” and “It’s How You Play the Game!” would MOST LIKELY agree that individuals should
- A** learn to use technology appropriately.
  - B** hesitate to use new technology.
  - C** welcome the use of new technology.
  - D** protest the use of technology.
- 31** The authors of “It’s How You Play the Game!” and “Taming Rude Technologies” would MOST LIKELY agree that new technology
- A** takes more time than it is worth.
  - B** allows individuals more free time.
  - C** makes people impolite.
  - D** gives people the right to be impolite.



- 32** The character in “The Open Window” who BEST fits the description of a storyteller by the author of “The Importance of Fiction” is
- A** Ronnie.
  - B** Vera.
  - C** Mrs. Sappleton.
  - D** Framton Nuttel.
- 33** The niece in the “The Open Window” would MOST LIKELY have less impact as a communicator using a computer because
- A** imagination was not necessary to create her story.
  - B** machines are not bothered by rude interruptions.
  - C** emotions are not found in computers.
  - D** computers cannot be used in a harmful way.
- 34** The authors of “Taming Rude Technologies” and “The Importance of Fiction” both suggest that communication is used to
- A** replace relationships.
  - B** avoid relationships.
  - C** develop relationships.
  - D** control relationships.

## **Selected Response Answer Key**

|    |                      |
|----|----------------------|
| 1  | C                    |
| 2  | A                    |
| 3  | B                    |
| 4  | C                    |
| 5  | A                    |
| 6  | C                    |
| 7  | B                    |
| 8  | D                    |
| 9  | C                    |
| 10 | D                    |
| 11 | A                    |
| 12 | C                    |
| 13 | D                    |
| 14 | D                    |
| 15 | B                    |
| 16 | C                    |
| 17 | A                    |
| 18 | C                    |
| 19 | B                    |
| 20 | D                    |
| 21 | A                    |
| 22 | D                    |
| 23 | A                    |
| 24 | B                    |
| 25 | B                    |
| 26 | D                    |
| 27 | B                    |
| 28 | A                    |
| 29 | D                    |
| 30 | A                    |
| 31 | B                    |
| 32 | B                    |
| 33 | C                    |
| 34 | C                    |
| 35 | Constructed Response |

## PART II

### Response-to-the-Reading-Selections

#### DIRECTIONS

You will have 30 minutes to complete this part of the test. In this part you are being asked to write an extended response related to the reading selections you read in Part I. You may wish to go back and reread or skim the selections before you start Part II. You should keep in mind the focus of this test booklet: "Do any forms of communication threaten our society?"

You **MUST** use the ideas in all three of the reading selections to write a one- to two-page thoughtful response to the SCENARIO QUESTION in the box below. If needed, your own ideas and experiences may be used in addition to the ideas from the three reading selections. **You MUST reference information and/or examples from ALL THREE of the reading selections in your response to be considered for full credit (4 points).**

**(4 points)**

#### Scenario

Aurora High School has a monthly newsletter from the principal that is distributed to the community. One section in the newsletter features outstanding student writing.

The current edition will have a student's account of a community project. Another student, while working in the computer lab, discovers the computer file containing the newsletter and decides to replace the community-project article. A fictional account that makes fun of several people in the area is inserted. The name of the original author is left on the story.

This practical joke goes undetected and the newsletter is distributed. The changed article proves upsetting to the community and humiliating to the author of the original article. As a result, several outraged community members go to the school board and demand that the student-writing section of the newsletter be eliminated.

#### Scenario Question

Should the school remove the student-writing section of the principal's newsletter? Why?

You may use the lined pages in your test booklet to plan your response, but your final response **MUST** be written in your answer document. No additional paper may be attached. Also, correction fluid may **NOT** be used. If you need to make a correction, cross out the error and write the correction above it.

Remember, only the response in the answer document will be scored. You may use either a black or blue pen or a pencil to write your response. If you choose to use a pencil, be sure your response is written darkly.

No, I don't think it should be permanently eliminated. I never did believe in the theory that "one bad apple spoils the whole bunch." Therefore, I don't think the immature actions of one student should affect the good students who are working hard and taking extra time out of their schedule to write an article. Although, I do think the student-writing section should be temporarily discontinued just for more punishment of this insignificant act, since no one student ever did take punishment. This would be an example of "taming rude technologies" which have made it possible for a student to change the article.

When the section has been reengaged after punishment, I do believe that the principal should double-check the article for any further mishaps before releasing it to the entire city.

Score: 1

The writer responds to the scenario question, stating that the student writing section should not be eliminated but does not demonstrate the ability to support this position with information from within the reading selections except for the one superficial reference to "Taming Rude Technologies."

No, because the student that was working in the same lab got ahold of this article and revised. If the Principal would of taking more precautions as in: one have the article on disk and keep it off of the hard drive, second have a password just to enter this article. Just a couple of precautions would be all that it takes.

So the student-writing section should remain in the newsletter just don't leave stuff like that lying around, so that anyone can make use of them. Some reasons why it should stay is that the editor should let noticed an article of this sort, from what you lead me to believe is that, that article is similar to "The Open Window" by Saki. Where she goes on to make up a story and have the reader or listener believe what she is saying.

Isaac Asimov's "It's How you Play the Game" tells us that with tech. there are down falls. If the article was not on a computer the other student in the lab would not of been able to change copies of the article.

"Taming Rude Technologies" by Gary T. Marx shows us some of the problems with Technologies but also shows us how to deal with it, and to put it under control.

So in Conclusion the Section should remain and the school should make greater strides in controlling there technologies.

Score: 2

This response provides limited examples from "The Open Window" and "It's How You Play the Game" to support the position that precautions should have been taken to protect the newsletter. The reference to "Taming Rude Technologies" makes only a vague connection to the scenario ("the school should make greater strides in controlling their technologies"). Although the writer recognizes the common idea of technology, more development and clearer connections are necessary for a higher score.

Communication betteres our society in many ways. It is used to teach, to compete, and basically give us a method in which to express ourselves. But communication can also be harmful. Such as in the case at Aurora High School. The student abused his priveleges and chose to communicate in a harmful way. Never-the-less, the student-writing section of the Principal's newsletter should not be removed because the voice of the student body is not heard.

In "The Open Window" a girl used a form of communication to harm another person. She told a story that someone believed in attempt to hurt them. This is also the case in the Aurora scenario. The prankster wrote a story that made fun of several community members. These are both forms of harmful fiction. ~~but not all harmful fiction is intentional~~

In "It's How You Play The Game" Isaac talks about Computers and how they help us to learn and to communicate more often. The student at Aurora also used a computer to communicate but he did it in a harmful way. But, the newsletter should have been better protected. On a disk, perhaps, or under a password.

In "The Importance of Fiction," the <sup>author</sup> talks about how fiction helps people to experience things, and that things are made interesting using the major components of fiction, such as: conflict, suspense, and consistency of voice. In the Aurora incident, a student told a story that was harmful, but by taking out the student writing section, you take away students ability to communicate with the community. Also, some student writings may be stories, but with that section gone, very few people will see them.

And finally in "Taming Rude Technologies," the author talks about how technology is becoming intrusive and can be used to violate peoples privacy. The kid at Aurora did just that, violated people privacy and used technology to cause harm. But the author also gives ~~me~~ some guidelines for proper technological etiquette. The student was the only one who violated these guidelines, so he should be the only one ~~punished~~ punished. Not the entire student body, ~~and~~ <sup>or</sup> the community who deserves to see what their kids are writing about in school.

Score: 3

The theme of this response is that communication "betters our society" except when it is used "in a harmful way." The response points out the similarities between "The Open Window" and the incident at Aurora High School. The writer contrasts what happened at Aurora High School to the ideas presented in "It's How You Play The Game" and "The Importance of Fiction" ("student used computer in a harmful way" and "told a story that was harmful"). Finally, the writer states that if the guidelines in "Taming Rude Technologies" were applied this incident could have been avoided. Although the theme of "harmful" is fairly explicit, some of the connections from the readings to the scenarios are weak.

Technology and communication can often be dangerous things. In this scenario, the use of computers has aided a student in sabotaging the principal's newsletter. A reader can draw several conclusions following the reading of "The Open Window," "It's How You Play the Game," "The Importance of Fiction," and "Taming Rude Technologies" which might relate to the scenario. Based on the information in these selections, the school should not remove the student-writing section of the principal's newsletter.

"The Open Window" by Saki places enormous significance on communication. In a subtle way, the author points out the power of language to provoke emotion in others. Vera, the model storyteller, is exemplary in that she uses her chimerical imagination to sway Mr. Nuttel's thoughts. "Romance at short notice was her specialty." (p. 6) Without this "on your toes" thinking and communicating, her scheme would have failed. It is exactly this "romance" that our society needs in its youth. By removing the student-writing section of the newsletter, the school board would be inhibiting and "caging-up" the beauty of youth expression.

"It's How You Play the Game" deals specifically with computers and technology. Its overall theme is that although "microcomputers are becoming more and more common" and "one hears doleful predictions that human minds will atrophy as all its functions are given over to machines," (p. 10) this technology boom is not as bad as it seems. Computers are more of a help to society than they are a hindrance. Although in this scenario the hacker misused his privileges, in the long run computers are a positive advancement for society, <sup>appreciate</sup>



In "The Importance of Fiction," E.L. Doctorow emphasizes fiction and the expression of ideas in a similar way to Saki in "The Open Window." "It is the most ancient way of knowing but also the most modern." (p.14) Here, he is saying that communication is essential, and he praises the storytelling techniques of youth like Vera from the previous selection. Doctorow would certainly be outraged if the student writing portion of the newspaper were eliminated.

"Taming Rude Technologies" is an objective account which looks at both sides of new communications technologies. On the one hand, he would be outraged at this student hacker from the scenario. However, "While such convention develop, we can take a variety of actions to protect ourselves from rudeness and invasiveness." (p.17) He suggests several steps to better appreciation of technology. While rudeness is unethical and wrong, the school board should not take measures so drastic as to eliminate this portion of the newspaper. Rather they should look to nurture and correct this poor etiquette.

This hypothetical school would be making a grave error if they were to punish its student body. While communication and technology are often dangerous, it is important to understand this technology and not to expunge it.

Score: 4

This response develops the theme that although "technology and communication can often be dangerous" the student writing section should not be removed. The value of communication is nicely developed through relevant references to "The Open Window" and is applied to the importance of keeping the student writing section. Doctorow's appreciation of Vera's "storytelling techniques" is a thoughtful explicit connection across these two selections. Using relevant ideas from both "It's How You Play The Game" and "Taming Rude Technologies" the theme that "it is important to understand this technology and not expunge it" is developed.